

OKO'S ADVENTURE WITH THE MAN IN THE MOON.

A Proud Weathercock.

(A FABLE.)

A HUMBLE lot in security is better than the dangers that accompany the high and haughty.—Aesop.

One fine warm Summer morning a handsome black cock, with a flaming comb, strutted about before the other fowls, who gazed upon him with fond admiration. After pluming himself he flew high up on a picket fence, and, flapping his wings to attract attention, announced with a loud crow, "I am king of the barn y-i-r-d!" and the surrounding hills gave back the echo many times.

"Tut! tut! tut!" came a voice from above. And turning his head upon one side, his majesty caught sight of the brass weathercock on top of the barn, who glistened in the sunlight while swaying this way and that, as the wind varied.

"Ho! ho! ho!" jeered the weathercock in reply: "so you proclaim yourself the king. Why you do not command as high a position in the world as I, who can see the country for miles around. It is I who receive the first smile and 'good morning' from the sun as he rises out of the sea, and I am the last to say 'good night' to him as he rests his chin for a moment upon the brow of the western hill.

"Then, too, the farmer looks to me for advice, and it is I who tell him which of the winds the god Aeolus has sent to us, and when to stack his grain. Yes, I know and see all that goes on in the world, while you scratch and grovel in the dirt below. No, no, not you; but I am the king."

Saddened and crest-fallen, chanticleer came down from his high perch and crowed no more that day. The other fowls quickly gathered around him with "clucks" of consolation, and vowing their eternal homage, while the pigeons, too, who had overheard all, coo-cooed soft words of comfort to him.

But alas! nothing could drive away the envy that filled his heart, and longingly he gazed, first with one eye and then with the other, upon the brazen vane which had so completely usurped his throne.

Late in the night some low, warning growls gradually increased to a terrific crash of thunder, which seemed to rend the very earth, awaking at once all the occupants of the roost, and instantly the rain came down in torrents.

"Ah!" remarked the old white hen, with words of wisdom, "I have heard it said that 'all men are equal in the dark,' but it seems that you, chanticleer, are more fortunate here under shelter than that pompous weathercock with all his knowledge and fine airs, up there playing at skittles with the elements."

The cock felt the truth of this but said nothing, and soon all was quiet once more. Daybreak came at last, and the cock, stretching one wing and then the other, hopped down from his roost and sauntered out to the barnyard. But what a startling sight greeted his eye! There upon the ground lay the poor weathercock, blackened and twisted by the lightning in the storm of the night before—a sad deformity.

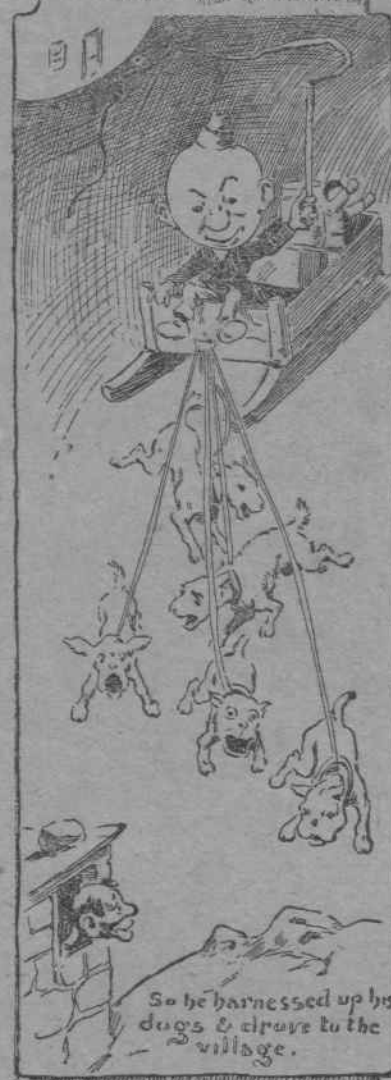
Loudly he called to all his subjects, who came with rapid strides to look with dismay upon the unfortunate vane.

"Loved ones," said the cock, "I am your king no longer, simply your companion and protector." And then he espied a long, fat earth worm crawling from the ground, and, quickly seizing upon it, he laid it before his family, but in the greatness and humbleness of his heart touched not one morsel for his own breakfast.

ELLA STARR.



"I'll have to help that boy," said the Man in the Moon.



So he harnessed up his dogs & drove to the village.



And he dipped the boy into Magic Pool to make him grow.

OKO was a little Inuit boy, who lived in the far North. No father or mother cared for him. He had to sleep with the dogs instead of staying in the warm snow hut with other people, and all he got to eat was what he found. He was always cold and hungry, and he did not grow. He was called Oko, the Dwarf, and children much younger than he abused and ill-treated him. Only Tinu, a nice little girl, was sorry for him, and she used to save him a part of her own dinner whenever she could.

Oko cried very much, and his face grew ugly. Sometimes a tormenting man would lift him by his nose and sometimes by one ear, and his ears and nose were twice as big as they should be.

So it went on for years and years. Tinu was almost a woman and still Oko was still short, like a dwarf. The Man in the Moon could seldom look out of the front door of the moonhouse without seeing poor little Oko crying from hunger and cold, or sleeping among the dogs.

"I shall have to nail up the front door of the moonhouse, and the windows, too," said the Man in the Moon, "if I do not go down to that village and do something for that boy. I can't stand it much longer."

At last the Man in the Moon harnessed his dogs, and he loaded his sledge with plenty of dried salmon and bear meat, and drove to the village and called out: "Come out, little Oko, come out!"

But Oko was afraid. He crept in among the dogs as far as he could.

"Go away, strange man," said he, "I will not come out."

But the Man in the Moon asked him three times. At last Oko came out, and the Man in the Moon put him in his sledge, told him to eat and drove off. Soon he stopped and rubbed Oko all over with snow till his skin was very red. Then he drove on again.

Oko filled his mouth with bear meat and tried to get his old clothes on again, but he could not. He had begun to grow, and he was growing very fast. Soon the sledge stopped again. The Man in the Moon drew a circle on the ice with the end of his whip. And the next minute water began to bubble up in the middle of that magic circle.

The Man in the Moon took Oko by one heel and dipped him way down in the ice-cold water and pulled him out and rubbed him. He did this three times, and Oko did not like it, but it made him grow.

The Man in the Moon drove on in his sledge again, and he never stopped till he came to the edge of the snow and ice, where there was nothing but bare ground and moss and big, smooth stones. Oko tried to lift the stones, but he could not.

"He is not big enough yet," said the Man in the Moon to himself. "It is hard work to make a little boy grow ten years all in one day. I shall have to loosen his skin a great deal more."

So he whipped Oko to loosen his skin, and the more Oko was whipped the faster he grew. Soon he could jump and run as well as the wonderful dogs. And Oko lifted a stone as big as himself.

The Man in the Moon dressed Oko in nice warm clothes and took him back to the village. "Don't be afraid of the bears," said he, "for you are quicker and stronger than they are." Then he jumped into his sledge and very soon it was a speck on the white clouds on the way to the moon.

Soon after three big bears came growling to the village. The people ran into the singing house as fast as they could, and Oko was outside alone. One of the men looked out the window. "There is a fine, handsome boy out there," said he. "It is a pity that he should be eaten up."

"Oh, it can only be Oko," said another, who stood near, "and he is of no use."

Tinu cried, for she was sorry for Oko. "It is not a boy. It is not a boy. It's Hozog, the Spirit of the North Wind," said a man. "See, he jumps over the first bear, catches him by the hind leg, whirls him into the air."

"Let me see," said the other man, looking out of the house. "He has got another bear by the hind leg. How he swings him about. The bear goes flying way up into the air. Whew! What a strong man."

The next moment all the men and women gave a wild cry of alarm, for the bear came crashing down the chimney right in front of them. Everybody scampered, and the women and children screamed.

Oko threw the bear that way on purpose, but he didn't let the bear hurt them. He went into the house laughing and threw out the bear. He forgave his enemies and gave Tinu the best bear-skin.

Now the Man in the Moon smiles when he looks out of the front door of the moonhouse and sees Oko and Tinu and the others playing on the shore of Hudson's Bay.



And the boy got so strong that he threw around the bears that were making fun of everybody.

And one bear tried to fall down a chimney & even the birds laughed at him.